

How will the World End?

My Course study group which meets on Thursday evenings, had spent the preceding week practicing lessons 281 and 284. When we gathered together to discuss our practice and pick a new practice for the following week, someone brought up the recent news report that 'The Rapture', a biblical term for the end of the world and the second coming of Jesus, was going to occur this Saturday, May 21, 2011. Although at first glance this did not seem to tie into our practice of electing to change thoughts that hurt with Thoughts of God; we discovered that even this story of a rapture where a vengeful God plans for the destruction and pain of those who choose to decide against Him, does represent thoughts held in the mind and these thoughts wreak havoc on our peace. If we can elect to change all thoughts that hurt, what Thoughts might Holy Spirit share with us that would bring lasting peace and joy? We decided to look at what the Course teaches about the end of the world and how to gain our rightful place in the Kingdom by reading from the Manual for Teachers # 14. "How Will the World End?"

To answer the question, "How will the world end?" we first must look at a few preceding questions, such as "What is the world?", "How was it made?" and "What is the meaning of the word "end"? In summary, the world consists of images made from thoughts of guilt and fear. This is not a stretch for one to see that this is true. Think of anything you see in the world and you will find behind the image, thoughts that are offshoots of fear and guilt such as attack, rejection, lack, loss, pain and death.

"If indeed it is our own imaginings made from our hurtful thoughts, than (we) can loose it from all things (we) ever thought it was by merely changing all the thoughts that gave it these appearances". (#132:8)

Therefore, the world as we know it will end when it's thought system has been completely reversed. How does this reversal take place? We are given a Savior (Holy Spirit) who exchanges our separated thoughts of guilt and fear with God's Thoughts of innocence and love. We often hear in Course circles that the world is an illusion. In W. #281 and #284, we learn what this means. It is an illusion because what we see is made from thoughts and the thoughts are false; therefore what is made from false thinking is a false world. But we must not stop there. That is only part I of the miracle. Part II is allowing these false thoughts to be exchanged for the truth. In accepting true thoughts to replace false thinking, the world will end this way.....

T-11.VIII.1:1-8 "This is a very simple course. Perhaps you do not feel you need a course which, in the end, teaches that only reality is true. But do you believe it? When you perceive the real world, you will recognize that you did not believe it. Yet the swiftness with which your new and only real perception will be translated into knowledge will leave you but an instant to realize that this alone is true. And then everything you made will be forgotten; the good and the bad, the false and the true. For as Heaven and earth become one, even the real world will vanish from your sight. The end of the world is not its destruction, but its translation into Heaven."

To help usher in the real world; we first must withdraw our desire for the one we see and made from our thoughts. This is easy to do when we realize that everything we want- safety, love, joy, consistency, eternal life, and peace- cannot be found in the world made from thoughts of separation, guilt, fear, sickness and death. But it can be found with the transformation of these thoughts in our mind. When our mind is filled only with holy

thoughts, we will be at peace and the world - which is images made from our thoughts-, will reflect the content of our mind.

The group decided to practice lessons 129 and 130 to deepen our understanding of these teachings. The practice has us close our physical eyes and rely on the Strength of God to bring us to the truth, to lift our awareness far above this world into the real world that reflects our Father. Throughout the day we are asked to resist the temptation to choose against God's Creation by remembering that to see the unreal *as* real and the false *as* true is to choose against what we really want. We do not want *this* world to be reality. Why would we? Would we not rather have our identity be a holy Son of God; and our home be Heaven? If this is what we truly want, than it will be given us. Therefore the practice can be summed up in this way: withdraw our desire for the world that reflects separation, guilt and fear to be reality and desire and value only that which is truth. In other words; the world I made I do not want. I let go of all thoughts that are holding this world in place and I choose instead Reality as God created It.

Our desire for a world of separation caused the world's birth. Therefore it will be our desire for Heaven that will cause its end. Its ending is much like letting the backdrop fall on a theater stage. What is behind the backdrop was always there, just not seen because of what was made to hide it. The only things holding this backdrop up are thoughts of guilt and fear and the desire that it remain. Release the thoughts and desire only the Kingdom and all Heaven is given unto you.

In conclusion, let me say that the rapture idea that is being talked about in the media, at the dinner table, around the water cooler and in ACIM study groups, is only a story of fear and guilt. As the story is presented over and over we have an opportunity to release the thoughts of fear and guilt that still persist within our holy mind, and share instead the Thoughts of innocence and love that come rushing in with this release. *And* we can rejoice when we wake up the morning after the "rapture", because we will have learned that only the Thoughts of God are true.